

Causes of error of mental sense consciousnesses

- Mantras and medicinal substances applied by magicians etc.,
- Wrong philosophical tenets which cause one to assert the existence of a permanent, partless, independent self or the existence of a fundamental nature
- Wrong reasoning
- Being adversely affected by sleep, and so forth

Objects (objects of awarenesses) that are true and unreal *relative to the perspective of the world*

Chandrakirti says in his *Supplement to the Middle Way*:

*Those that are apprehended by six unimpaired senses
Which are realized by the worldly [perspectives],
These are true for the world; as for the rest,
Even for the world they are posited as unreal.*

As explained earlier (Handout 20) there are awarenesses that are true or correct *relative to the perspective of the world*. The objects of those awarenesses are also true *relative to the perspective of the world*. However, objects which are not apprehended by those awarenesses are considered unreal *relative to the perspective of the world*.

Therefore, objects are of two types *relative to the perspective of the world*:

1. Objects that are true *relative to the perspective of the world*
2. Objects that are unreal *relative to the perspective of the world*

Objects that are true *relative to the perspective of the world*

Objects that are true *relative to the perspective of the world* are objects which are considered to exist the way they appear to a direct perceiver by those who have never taken emptiness to mind.

The meaning of objects, that are true relative to the perspective of the world, is:

Objects which are considered to exist the way they appear to a direct perceiver by those who have never taken emptiness to mind.

Instances of objects, that are true *relative to the perspective of the world*, are: pots, pillars, the sound of a conch shell, the taste of molasses, an inherently existent person, and so forth.

Please note that objects, that are true *relative to the perspective of the world*, do not necessarily exist, such as an inherently existent person.

Objects that are unreal *relative to the perspective of the world*

Objects that are unreal *relative to the perspective of the world* are objects which are considered not to exist the way they appear to a direct perceiver by those who have never taken emptiness to mind.

The meaning of objects, that are true relative to the perspective of the world, is:

Objects which are considered not to exist the way they appear to a direct perceiver by those who have never taken emptiness to mind.

Instances of objects, that are true *relative to the perspective of the world*, are: horns of a rabbit, the reflection of a face in a mirror being a real face, a person's echo being a person's voice, an elephant in a dream, a permanent, partless, independent self, and so forth.

Those instances are all non-existent. However there are also instances which exist. Those are: reflections of a face in a mirror, a person's echo, a mirage of water, a dream-elephant, a rainbow, and so forth.

Please note that this distinction of true and unreal objects is only *relative to the perspective of the world*; it is not from the point of view of the Middle Way system and therefore not *relative to the perspective of Arya beings*.

English: relative to the perspective of the world /or: relative to the perspective of the consciousness of the world

Tibetan: འདིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཤེས་རྒྱུ་ལ་སྟོན་པ། *Jig ten gyi She Ngo la Doe pa* (*Jig ten* = world/transient world/

mundane/transmigratory existence, *jig* = disintegrate/perish/destroy, *ten* = basis/support/base,

She (pa) = consciousness/knower, *Ngo* = perspective/face, *la* = grammatical particle, *Doe pa* = relative to, dependent on)

DEMONSTRATING THAT THE REFERENT OBJECT OF [THE MIND] THAT IS MISTAKEN WITH RESPECT TO ITS REFERENT OBJECT DOES NOT EXIST EVEN CONVENTIONALLY

As explained earlier, a mental consciousness becomes a wrong consciousness and thus mistaken with respect to its referent object in dependence on adverse causes of error. If an awareness is mistaken with respect to its referent object, the referent object does not exist even conventionally.

This is illustrated on the basis of the following examples:

From Chandrakirti's *Supplement to the Middle Way*:

*Those "truths" postulated by Non-Buddhists,
Who are affected by the sloth of unknowing,
And those designated to an illusion, a mirage, and so on,
They do not even exist from the [perspective] of the world.*

Non-Buddhist philosophers, whose minds are affected by inferior philosophical views and false reasoning, hold various wrong views regarding reality. Even though they aspire to postulate the truth, they generate numerous wrong mental consciousnesses that are mistaken with respect to their referent objects; referent objects such as:

- the existence of a permanent, partless, independent self,
- the existence of a fundamental nature which is the source of everything that exists
- Ishvara being the creator of the universe, and so forth

Those referent objects do not accord with reality and thus do not exist even from the perspective of the world, i.e. conventionally.

Lama Tsongkhapa explains that those non-Buddhist philosophers aspire to excel ordinary worldly beings. However, since they are affected by wrong philosophical views, their fabricated ideas of a creator or a permanent, partless, independent self, etc. violate existence on a conventional level. At the same time their views also do not accord with the ultimate truths so that they fall into the abyss of wrong views, depriving themselves of the perfect sight of the two truths. Thus, they are like those, who trying to climb a tree, let go of the lower branches before holding onto the higher branches and therefore fall down.

Also awarenesses that wrongly designate a magical illusion of a horse to be an *actual* horse or the mirage of water to be *real* water etc. are wrong consciousnesses and thus their referent objects (the magical illusion of the horse being an actual horse, the mirage of water being real water, etc.) do not exist even conventionally.

Therefore, in order for something to exist conventionally it must be established by conventional valid cognizers. Furthermore, even though the valid cognizers of worldly beings, i.e. conventional valid cognizers, cannot contradict the awarenesses that apprehend the ultimate truth (the emptiness of phenomena existing inherently) they contradict those awarenesses of mistaken philosophers etc.

Moreover, due to the contamination by ignorance the five sense objects - form sense spheres, sound sense spheres, and so forth - appear to sense consciousnesses to exist inherently. Thus, sense consciousnesses that apprehend any of the five sense objects are just as mistaken (with respect to the appearance of inherent existence) as sense consciousnesses that apprehend the reflection of a face in a mirror or a person's echo (with respect to the appearance of an actual face and a person's voice). Even though there is a difference of subtlety regarding the mistaken appearances, those two awarenesses are the same in being mistaken with regard to their objects of appearance.

Further, just as the color blue being inherently existent does not accord with reality likewise a reflection of a face *being a face* does not accord with reality. However, just as the reflection of a face (that is empty of being a face) exists likewise the color blue (that is empty of being inherently existent) exists. In fact, both are form sense spheres and thus objects of an eye consciousness.

